

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for considering the present application. In the Office Action dated December 13, 2004, claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Claims 4 and 13 have been canceled. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the present application.

Paragraphs 18 through 26 of the specification has been amended to correct printing (formatting) errors. No new matter has been added.

Claims 4-5 and 13-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. As mentioned above, Claims 4 and 13 have been canceled. Claims 5 and 14 have been amended and are believed to overcome this rejection.

Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 10 and 18. The amendments to Claims 1, 10 and 18 correspond to the material canceled in Claims 4 and 13. That is, Claim 1 now recites the step of regularizing the image ratio by adding a constant to the denominator to form a regularized image ratio. The same amendments have been made to Claims 10 and 18.

Applicants have reviewed the Examiner's comments with respect to Claim 4. The Examiner points to the adder 7 at Col. 7, lines 17-23. Applicants admit that the ratio of the first mean and the second mean is described. What is not shown is that a constant is added to a denominator. The adder unit as illustrated in line 14 adds the offset correction term to the image. This, however, is not a denominator. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the rejections of Claims 1, 10 and 18. Likewise, Claims 2, 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 16, 19, and 20 are also believed to be allowable for the same reasons set forth above.

Claims 3, 6, 8, 12, 15, and 17 stand rejected as being unpatentable over *Bruijns* (5,974,113) in view of *Poland* (6,080,107). Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are dependent upon allowable base claims. Applicants respectfully submit that no teaching or suggestion is found in the *Poland* reference for adding a constant to a denominator. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner for a reconsideration of these claims as well.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that all rejections are now overcome. The Applicants have added no new material to the application by these amendments. The application is now in condition for allowance and expeditious notice thereof is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments which would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,
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